

Minutes of General Meeting

Date	5 December 2017
Time	10.00-12.00
Venue	Ridgway Room Stoke Town Hall

Agenda topic	Action				
<p>Attendees:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geoff Bryan • Pam Bryan • Stephanie Wood • Jennifer Pardue • Emily Horsfall (Gareth Snell MP office) • Winston Green • Eileen Bloomfield </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Lamonby • Adam Bradbury • Jo Coulson Disability Solutions • Angie Bunn Disability Solutions • Philip Woodward • Mick Jones • John Burgess • Lesley Smith (Stoke City Council) </td> </tr> </table> <p>Apologies received from:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horace Hodson • Gay Holborne </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike and Pat Dixon </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geoff Bryan • Pam Bryan • Stephanie Wood • Jennifer Pardue • Emily Horsfall (Gareth Snell MP office) • Winston Green • Eileen Bloomfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Lamonby • Adam Bradbury • Jo Coulson Disability Solutions • Angie Bunn Disability Solutions • Philip Woodward • Mick Jones • John Burgess • Lesley Smith (Stoke City Council) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horace Hodson • Gay Holborne 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike and Pat Dixon 	
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<p>1. Attendees and Apologies</p> <p>John Beech welcomed members and visitors.</p> <p>Apologies received and noted.</p>					
<p>2. Minutes of meeting of 22nd August 2016</p> <p>Minutes were accepted as true record of meeting of 22nd August 2017</p>					

<p>3. Matters arising</p>	
<p>Phil asked if Rachel Dean from Healthwatch had managed to visit any other groups with her Dementia Awareness training. Pam said that Rachel's contract with Healthwatch had ended and that she had not had the opportunity to see her to find out.</p> <p>Mick asked if the buzzer on Kingsway entrance was working. John Beech said that it was working but it takes ages for it to be answered because of staffing levels. Mick said he understood the need for security but if the King's Hall was open for an event, didn't that give access to the rest of the building. John Beech said that access was now controlled.</p> <p>Mick said that his family had bought a communication board for his grandson Dan and he thought that this was a brilliant idea which could also work for people with dementia.</p> <p>Phil said that now Ro Ffello had lost his seat, he had tried to contact the new MP Jack Brereton but had not had any response. Phil was very unhappy at the lack of response as he feels that MPs should be supporting disabled people. He will keep trying.</p> <p>Mick said that he believed that MPs should be taking up the issue of fitness to work tests on behalf of disabled people. Emily said that Gareth Snell MP is taking this on. He has written to the DWP but has not yet had a reply and has raised a question in Prime Minister's Question Time. This issue is something that Gareth is very much aware of. Phil asked if Gareth was also aware that if a medical professional signs someone as fit to work and they subsequently die after having gone back to work, then they are liable legally and can be struck off – this liability also applies to DWP. John Beech said that most people will agree that the system is a mess and he predicted that it will be even worse when Universal Credit comes on. This will have a significant impact on the income of disabled people.</p> <p>Jennifer offered her apologies to the group for bringing up her concerns in the wrong way at the last meeting.</p>	
<p>4. Blue Iris update</p>	
<p>Lesley gave a short verbal report on Blue Iris. She offered her sincere thanks to Jo Coulson who has made a magnificent job of designing the newsletter. Pam agreed that the newsletter has attracted lots of favourable comments. Lesley said that people also have commented that they appreciate feedback on Blue Iris progress.</p> <p>A decision will be made about Blue Iris's Peoples' Project second stage application on 16th January. If our project is shortlisted, we'll need members to support our promotional work.</p> <p>Pam had attended an outreach event at U3A last week and had had a great response to the project. She's spoken to someone from Stone Lions and as a result of his advice had submitted a request for funding from Stoke Lions and Stone Lions for 1000 badges. She will report back to members.</p>	
<p>5. Parliamentary Training</p>	
<p>Pam has had a number of emails from Parliament asking for opinions on issues to do with disability. She thinks it's fantastic that STAND now has a voice in parliament. STAND are now</p>	

organising a trip to parliament for those members who attended the training.	
6. Bagnall Street disabled person's parking bays	
<p>This item is in response to concerns raised by a member that passengers with disabilities are at risk disembarking from cars parked in the disabled person's parking bays in Bagnall Street Hanley.</p> <p>John said that as Bagnall Street was one way, either drivers or passengers would be benefitted by moving the bays. Lesley also said that the bays were on that side of the road agreed at previous consultation with STAND as buses use the other side of the road and this side is safer.</p> <p>Mick and John Beech led a discussion about the adequacy of the bus station and the impact on public space and highway around the station for disabled people. Geoff asked what had happened about the disabled parking bays that were promised on grassed area by the museum. John Beech said that as they had never materialised he assumed that the budget had been spent on other works. He still anticipated the work would be done under phase 2.</p> <p>Jennifer said that she had had real problems parking in the Bethesda Street area. Parking spaces are very tight and inconsiderate drivers were making the situation worse by parking too close and blocking other vehicles in. She asked if stand could consider developing a Polite Notice to put on the vehicles of inconsiderate parkers.</p> <p>Members had a discussion about the consultation they did with Peter Bradbury (previously consultant to Stoke Council on the new bus station and bus rerouting). Members concluded that their views had not been properly considered.</p> <p>John Beech asked Lesley to remind Highways Team that he is still awaiting a list of "dual purpose" accessible parking bays (bays for Blue badge holders which can also be used by loading vehicles).</p> <p>Elaine reported that one of her family members had been fined when parked in the side street by the Regent Theatre. John said there used to be parking bays for disabled people there, but they had been taken away and Blue Badge holders were not allowed to stop, wait or park in a loading bay. He also advised that disabled people should always challenge a fine and Jennifer agreed that a polite challenge is always a good idea. Pam said blue badge holders should never take anything for granted – parking changes all the time. Phil agreed and advised that it is always worth checking the signs.</p>	LS
7. ROAR	
<p>Jennifer reported that the event had gone well and was well attended. NORSCARF felt that the event had been a success. She thanked Lesley and Mick for attending.</p> <p>She felt that disability hate crime had been left off the agenda but felt very strongly that it should be on the agenda for the next event in 2 years' time. She will consult with STAND closer to the next event.</p> <p>John said it was a brilliant day. Mick said he had every much enjoyed the speakers but felt that the world seemed to be a terrible place – every country has its problems.</p>	

<p>8. Disability Inclusion Strategy for Entertainment and Culture</p>	
<p>Lesley talked about this new strategy which has the aim of making more venues and events more accessible to more disabled people. She offered an invitation for people with disabilities to join the Working Group which will be convened to support arts/ culture/ entertainment providers to make their premises and activities more accessible. Anyone who is interested please contact Lesley.</p> <p>John said it was hard to understand that service providers had not got their act together in the years since disability discrimination became against the law (1995). The problem is that there is no direct link between e.g. planning law and the equalities legislation. Angie pointed out that there is no-one “policing” disability equality laws – no-one “owns it”, no-one is responsible for making sure that businesses do what they are legally obliged to do. There is no-one who can say “You must do this” or “You can’t do that”. If something is discriminatory to disabled people, they have to fight for their rights on their own.</p> <p>John said that it should be condition of planning permission and licensing that new venues are fully accessible.</p> <p>Phil said that Stoke council should put its own house in order first before it looks to advise other service providers. He outlined a case where a disabled lady had moved into a property with a shower. However the shower was removed and a new bathroom was fitted. This lady must now apply for a shower to be fitted. This was a ludicrous decision. The group then had a brief discussion about the lack of suitable homes for people with disabilities particularly bungalows.</p> <p>Lesley said the Strategy will ensure wins for disabled people in terms of access to entertainment and cultural activities and so this is a worthwhile thing to do.</p>	
<p>9. Access to parking at Smithfield</p> <p>David Powell was unable to attend the meeting and had asked Lesley to report back to members. The initial complaint was around difficulties that disabled people had been having accessing the disabled persons’ parking bays on the Smithfield site in order to attend meetings after normal office hours. David had investigated but had found no information on any specific incidents reported. However he had spoken to his Smithfield team and gave an undertaking to STAND members that Blue Badge holders would be given access to the parking bays.</p>	
<p>10. Kingsway TRO</p>	
<p>Group discussed new TRO which had proposals to change to traffic flow around Kingsway in Stoke.</p> <p>Group asked Lesley to check it out and report back. John also asked if there had been any accidents / incidents reported for vehicles turning into Kingsway off Glebe Street.</p>	LS

11 AOB	
<p>Mick said that he would like to check the bus station traffic flow but that he was not fit enough to do so.</p> <p>Phil said that STAND should be aware that some members going on the trip to Parliament will need to take a carer/ supporter with them. Pam said that anyone who attended the training was welcome to go to London but must pay their own travel costs.</p>	
<p>Date of next general meeting: Tuesday 20th February 10.00am – 12.00 noon</p> <p>Meet in Kingsway at 9.45am please</p>	